



SPRING'S
IMMORTALITY
AND
OTHER POEMS

BY
MACKENZIE BELL



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NOTICES OF A FORMER VOLUME OF VERSE BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

“MR. MACKENZIE BELL, in an original and happy preface, indicates playfully the place which he aims to fill in poetry. He does not aspire to be an individual voice, or even an echo of an individual voice, but he shows that he can write good nervous prose, and can at once be finely ironical and humorous, and include himself in the subject of his laughter ; and he may claim at all events to be healthily objective and happily inspiring in a plain, unpretending way. He admits he is old-fashioned ; and so he is. He does not aspire to rhythmic novelties, or perverse metrical tricks after exotic examples ; beyond the sonnet, indeed, he does not go. But his forms suffice him ; as we read, we say happy also he who in poetry does not aim beyond his reach. . . . There is decided humour in ‘Waiting for the Dentist,’ and a real lyrical glow in such pieces as ‘Heart Echoes,’ and the ‘Heart’s Summer.’ On the whole the volume attests a buoyant, healthy nature, open to fine impressions, and quick to turn the ordinary incidents of every day to poetic account.”—*British Quarterly Review*.

“Mr. Mackenzie Bell prefaces his volume with a short dissertation on the kinds and uses of minor poetry. The little essay is certainly amusing, and is refreshing as affording proof that there is at least one minor poet who has not mistaken his function.”—*Academy*.

“We have great pleasure, indeed, in commending these poems to our readers.”—*Literary World*.

“With true consistency the poet has carried out his ideas. . . . This volume of poems is far beyond the usual run of verse, and we hope soon to see something more from the same skilful pen. This deserves to be a very successful book, for the merits are of no common order.”—*Public Opinion*.

“The author has evidently a good deal of poetic power ; and some of his verses are soothing as well as in the highest sense suggestive.”—*Churchman*.

“The author’s dedicatory sonnet is really very beautiful.”—*Liverpool Mercury*.

“He is one of the few who have a cause to express themselves in metre, though his is no mere idle tinkling of the lyre ; his voice has exceptional power and sweetness, he has a keen eye for the poetical aspects of human life and external nature, and there runs through his verses a pure vein of imaginative thought that makes them pleasant reading.”—*Manchester Courier*.

“The descriptive poems are decidedly the best.”—*Western Morning News*.

“Mr. Mackenzie Bell’s verses are all as unpretentious as his preface ; but they contain many pretty conceits, marks of a fertile imagination, fruits of serious thought on the mysteries of life, and effective descriptions of scenery. . . . ‘Heart Echoes’ is a beautiful little poem. We may quote the opening stanza as a fair specimen of the author’s best style. . . . ‘Edgar Vanning : a Sketch’ is a very creditable piece of blank-verse writing.”—*Western Daily Mercury*.

“Clever bits of description, quaint fancies.”—*Yorkshire Post*.

“As a singer he touches, not without a certain skill, the simple loves and hopes, and aims, the simple faith and creed, with which his heart is well content.”—*Literary World*, Boston, U.S.A.

“The author has prefixed to this volume of poetry an interesting preface on the claims of minor poets to be heard.”—*Bibliographer*.

“There are verses in it which deserve to live.”—*The Presbyterian*.

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AND OTHER POEMS.

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BY

MACKENZIE BELL.

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TO
MY FRIEND
EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN,
FROM WHOSE POETRY AND SUBTLE CRITICISM OF
POETRY I, WITH MANY OF MY COUNTRYMEN,
HAVE FOR YEARS DERIVED MUCH
DEEP AND GENUINE PLEASURE,
I DEDICATE THIS
VOLUME.

861869

PREFATORY NOTE.

My former books of verse have all been long out of print. The volume now issued, besides the new poems to be found in it, contains, in an altered and greatly revised form, some of my previously published verse. I am indebted to the courtesy of the Editors of *The Academy*, *The Speaker*, *Temple Bar*, and other periodicals, for permission to reprint poems which have appeared in their pages. Two early pieces of mine, "The Late Autumn is Dying," and "December Daisies and December Days," attained some popularity in America by being included in Mr. Oscar Fay Adams's *Through the Year with the Poets*. Though

I have submitted them to considerable revision,
I trust those who liked the first versions will not
regret my changes.

MACKENZIE BELL.

LONDON, *October*, 1893.

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SPRING'S IMMORTALITY.

THE buds awake at touch of Spring
From Winter's joyless dream ;
From many a stone the ouzels sing
By yonder mossy stream.

The cuckoo's voice, from copse and vale,
Lingers, as if to meet
The music of the nightingale
Across the rising wheat—

The bird whom ancient Solitude
Hath kept for ever young,
Unaltered since in studious mood
Calm Milton mused and sung.

Ah, strange it is, dear heart, to know
Spring's gladsome mystery
Was sweet to lovers long ago—
Most sweet to such as we—

That fresh new leaves and meadow flowers
Bloomed when the south wind came ;
While hands of Spring caressed the bowers,
The throstle sang the same.

* * * * *

Unchanged, unchanged the throstle's song,
Unchanged Spring's answering breath,
Unchanged, though cruel Time was strong,
And stilled our love in death.

THE LAME BOY IN THE WOODS.

EACH season hath its sadness, but for me
Summer hath most of all. I know not why,
But though its sylvan beauty soothes my soul
And brings sweet reveries—though the happy
birds,
Discoursing music, stir my mind with dreams,
With melodies, with thoughts of deep delight ;
Yet still there lurks within the Summer's heart
Or in mine own, a pain—a deep, wild pain—
Which, even amid still Autumn's ravages
I never feel, nor yet in Winter's storms.
Is it, I ask, that Summer's voiceless spell—
Her loveliness of copse and lea and flower
Is all too soon dissolved—that blossoms fade

When Summer's glory dies?

Ah, no; ah, no!

It is that Summer's mocking gladness lends
To loss a sharper sting when I recall
The joy of buoyant health and tireless limbs
Which others feel—alas! through all my life
A joy that knows not me.

ASPIRATIONS.

O for the poet's voice and song—
Piercing, yet sweet and clear,
Rich as the cushat's note, yet strong
To reach the great world's ear!

O for the visions that abide
Within the poet's mind,
The thoughts which through his bosom glide
Leaving strange joy behind !

O for the fruit—immortal fruit
Soiled by no earthly leav'n,
Not fame alone, nor vain repute,
But something caught from heav'n—

Assurance that my strain has cheered
One soul, if only one,
And shed on the dark path it feared
A passing glimpse of sun.

SONNETS.

OLD YEAR LEAVES.

TOSSED by the storms of Autumn chill and drear,
The leaves fall auburn-tinted, and the trees
Stand reft and bare, yet on the silent leas
The leaves lie drifted still—while cold, austere,
Stern Winter waits—while early snowdrops cheer
The woodland shadows—while the happy bees
Are wakened by the balmy western breeze,
And birds and boughs proclaim that Spring is here.

So lost hopes severed by the stress of life
Lie all unburied yet before our eyes,
Though none but we regard their mute decay ;
And ever amid this stir and moil and strife
Fresh aims and growing purposes arise
Above the faded hopes of yesterday.

IN MEMORIAM, W. E. FORSTER.

(OBITUARY APRIL 5TH, 1886.)

O STALWART man and pure, whose earnest face
Mirrored thy fair-orbed soul, whose every deed
Made answer to thy word, who gav'st no heed
To selfish babble or the lust of place,
Who—grieving at thy country's perilous case
Grown dire by lack of knowledge—in her need
Cam'st with thy succour—thou whose civic creed,
Too wide for party, dealt with all the race.

A year hath passed since thou wast laid to rest,
Yet fragrant is thy memory ; thy bequest
A work whose scope and grandeur Time shall
gauge.

Britain some day—her daughter-lands apart
No longer—will remember thee whose heart
Fired hers to win her world-wide heritage.

AT THE GRAVE OF DANTE GABRIEL
ROSSETTI.

APRIL 9TH, 1883.¹

HERE of a truth the world's extremes are met :

Amid the grey—the moss-grown tombs of those
Who led long lives obscure till came the close
When, their calm days being done, their suns were
set—

Here stands a grave, all monumentless yet,
Wrapt like the others in a deep repose ;
But while yon wakeful ocean ebbs and flows
It is a grave the world shall not forget—

This grave on which meek violets grow and thyme,
Summer's fair heralds ; and a stranger now
Pauses to see a poet's resting-place,
But one of those who will in many a clime
On each return of this sad day avow
Fond love's regret that ne'er they saw his face.

AN AUTUMN REMINISCENCE.

A RADIANT garden rises on my view
Where through the glowing hours the sunrays fall
Gently through hazel boughs; while brooklets
brawl
O'er beds where gleam the pebbles brown and blue.
Here, in that calm which never once they knew
On earth, dead heroes keep the slopes in thrall—
And russet ferns thereon, and dahlias tall,
And lilies white, and flowers of mingled hue.

Small wonder that these storied warrior forms
Should now in sculptured stone have rest, when I
Find here that Life's fierce conflicts seem to
cease—
Find respite here from all Life's rudest storms:—
Where still and silent 'neath a pale grey sky
Contented Nature smiles and lies at peace.

BROWNING'S FUNERAL.

I.

VENICE, DECEMBER 15TH, 1889.

“The body of Robert Browning was conveyed to a gondola which had the figure of an angel at the prow and a lion at the stern, and was covered with flowers. The relations and friends followed in gondolas across the lagoon, in the light of the setting sun, to the cemetery.”

Now “past they glide,” and bear the flower-wreathed bier

Across the soundless waters, cold and grey,
Ere Night falls, sable-vestured and austere,
And Day dies in one roseate flush away,
While they who follow, tearful, in the train
See wonted sights with unfamiliar eyes;—
Like dreams, amid the fevered sleep of pain,
Rich domes and frescoed palaces arise.

Yet, haply, mixed with sorrow, dawns the thought
How fit such obsequies for him whose pen
Hath given a wondrous poem,² passion-fraught,—
Breathing of love and Venice,—unto men :
And so hath added to her deathless glory
A shining scroll of pure and ageless story.

II.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY, DECEMBER 31ST, 1889.

The music of Croft and Purcell was used “as the Body was brought into Church, and for the processional parts of the burial service. This was followed by a ‘meditation,’ composed for the service by Dr. Bridge, the words from Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s ‘He giveth His beloved Sleep.’”

CROFT’s solemn music swells ; then comes at last
 The dim procession through the panelled choir ;
 And in the cloistral gloom, so still and vast,
 Many who loved him listen. Higher and higher
 Rise Purcell’s dirge-like tones, Grief’s very soul,
 Yet soon “He giveth His beloved Sleep”
 Brings to our anguished hearts relief, control,
 Memories of stately Florence, and the deep
 Love-sacrament which bound him to his spouse

Changeless through changeful years. And now
in heaven
They meet in bliss—meet to renew their vows
 Beyond the soiling touch of earthly leaven.
While England, as 'tis right, in sacred trust
Keeps through the centuries his hallowed dust.

AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

SHAKESPEARE, thy legacy of peerless song
Reveals mankind in every age and place,
In every joy, in every grief and wrong :
"Tis England's legacy to all our race.
Little we know of all thine inner life—
Little of all thy swift, thy wondrous years—
Years filled with toil—rich years whose days were
 rife
With strains that bring us mirth, that bring us
 tears.
Little we know, and yet this much we know,
 Sense was thy guiding star—sense guided thee
To live in this thy Stratford long ago—
 To live content in calm simplicity ;
Greatest of those who wrought with soul aflame
At honest daily work—then found it fame.

POEMS FOUNDED ON HISTORY.

THE TAKING OF THE FLAG.

THE dawning light
Hath banished Night,
Breaking the ocean's sleep—
For all around
Is heard a sound
Of war upon the deep.

The Dutch and we
Are met at sea
On this blithe summer day,
To try at length
Our fighting strength
In battle's bloody fray.

See ! on the right
Two ships in fight
In struggle long and hard,
And though so near,
They know not fear,
Close grappling yard to yard.

In very joy
An orphan boy
Speaks 'mid the battle's roar :
“ Since morning's sun
The fight has run,—
When will it then be o'er ? ”

“ 'Twill never lag
Till yon Dutch rag ³
Down from the mast-head runs,
No other sign
Along our line
Can silence British guns.”

“ If thus it be,”
Then swift quoth he
With brightly flashing eye ;
“ ’Twill soon be past,
Nor longer last,
Though if I fail, I die.”

Hid by the cloak
Of sable smoke,
Full noiselessly he goes ;
Nor does he wait,
But springs elate
'Mid Britain's fiercest foes.

And up their mast
He clammers fast :
He gains his precious prize :—
Then from aloft
He glides down soft,
With triumph in his eyes.

And through the roar
He bounds once more
To his appointed place;
Fearless, serene,
Is now his mien,
And noble looks his face.

Our men with glee
Shout “Victory!”
Waving the standard gay;
And from each gun
The Dutchmen run
In wonder and dismay.

And while their chief
Seeks, wild with grief,
To rally them in vain,
With one accord
Our sailors board,
And soon the vessel gain.

And of the youth
Who thus in truth
Had won a worthy name,
Men spoke aloud
In accents proud,
And world-wide was his fame.

THE KEEPING OF THE VOW.⁴

A.D. 1330.

KING ROBERT BRUCE is dying now,
Heavily comes his breath,
And that last strife 'twixt death and life
Will soon be won by death ;

Around his couch the liegemen stand ;
They heave full many a sigh,
In dire dismay and grief are they
To see their leader die.

“ Sir James of Douglas, come ! ” he cries,
“ Ever wert thou my friend,
And though we part, 'tis well thou art
With me unto the end.

“ When great my need I vowed to God
If He would grant to me
That war’s surcease should bring us peace,
And Scotland should be free,

“ His blessed banner I would bear
To holy Palestine,
With arms to quell the Infidel :
Such was your King’s design.

“ Sore grieved am I that here I lie—
Death’s hand upon my brow—
In vain, in vain, ’mid gnawing pain,
Do I recall my vow.

“ Then promise me right faithfully,
When I am laid at rest,
That with my heart thou wilt depart
To do my last behest ! ”

“ My liege, I pledge my knightly word,
Thy bidding shall be done,
The work is sad, yet am I glad
Such favour to have won !

“ Safe in my bosom shall thy trust
Abide with me for ever,
Unless, perchance, in peril’s hour,
’Twere best that we should sever.”

The king smiles faintly in reply—
Then slowly droops his head,
And on the breast of him he loved
Robert the Bruce lies dead.

In fit array at break of day
Doth Douglas soon depart,
And in a casket carefully
He keeps that Kingly Heart.

Crossing the main and sighting Spain,
He joins the truceless war
Of Moor and Christian—that fierce strife
Which rages as of yore;⁵

For straight he deems that here it seems
His devoir first should be,
And with his host he swells the boast
Of Spanish chivalry.

The armies twain on Tebas's plain
Outspread—a goodly sight!
Eager they wait with hope elate,
Impatient for the fight;

The summer sunbeams on the shields
Of warriors brightly glancing,
Illume the mail of many a man
And many a charger prancing,
And gallant crest, round which the breeze
Full gaily now is dancing;

Each Moslem there with scimitar,
Upon his Arab horse,
Moves with a calm, a fearless mien,
Unswerving in his course.

Lo here at length the stately strength
The Cross and Crescent wield,
As deadly foes now darkly close
Upon this fatal field.

The Spaniards' stroke hath broken through
The dense opposing line !
Yet none the less both armies press
Around their standard-sign,

While many a Paynim once so proud
Lies lifeless on the plain,
And many a jennet of Castile
Runs free with dangling rein.

First in the van the Douglas rides,

With all his men-at-arms,—

A worthy company are they

To front the Paynim swarms.

With bloody spur and loosened rein

They break the stubborn foe,

So swift the chase they scarce can trace

The course by which they go,

Till, looking back upon their track,

The Paynim ranks they see

Have closed them in, 'mid dust and din

And shout of wolfish glee.

“ We find full late the danger great,”

Sir Douglas cries, “ return !

And charge the foe like Scots who know

The rout at Bannockburn.—

“ Surely the men who conquered then
Vain Edward’s mighty host
Will never yield this sacred ⁶ field
Nor let the base Moor boast.”

So, boldly speaking, quick he turns—
He gallops to the rear—
This dauntless quest through fierce unrest
As gallant doth appear
As his who braves the foam-flaked waves
To succour one most dear.

As Douglas passed the blows fell fast—
Stern was the conflict wild,
With steeds and men, who ne’er again
Would rise, the field was piled.

Yet, with his followers not a few,
Now he has cleft his way
With flashing eye and flashing blade
Straight through the grim array,

Once more he glances round, and sees,
Still in the thickest fight,
Walter St. Clair, his well-beloved,
A very valiant knight.

Full oft had they in tourney gay
Their chargers deftly wheeled,
Full oft were nigh in days gone by
On many a battle field,—

“ Ride to the rescue ! ” Douglas shouts,
“ Ride on, and do not spare,
To save him from a woeful death
Which of you will not dare ! ”

Urging his horse with headlong force,
He seeks to render aid,
And many a tunic’s fold is cleft
By his resistless blade ;

Yet is he left, of friends bereft,
Swart foemen all around,
Through the echoing strokes on helm and shield
Of help there comes no sound.

Now snatches he the jewelled casque
Where lies the Heart he loves,
('Tis strange to see how lovingly
His mailed hand o'er it moves),

And flings it forward, forward yet,
With this his battle cry,
“ Press on, brave Heart, as thou wert wont :
I follow thee, or die ! ”

With lifted lance he makes advance
To where his treasure fell,
Each crash of blow—now fast, now slow--
Like a rude requiem knell,

And left alone, yet ne'er o'erthrown,
He grapples with the foe,
Until a sword-thrust piercing him
At last doth lay him low.

Then gallantly he struggles still,
Half kneeling on the plain,
And there, o'erwhelmed by many a wound,
The peerless knight is slain.

So died the chief, his life well lost
In Scottish hero's work,
The stainless Douglas, he who sleeps
In mossy Douglas kirk.

THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN HUNT.⁷

JANUARY 8TH, 1761.

THE watch on board the *Unicorn*
Look out at dawn of light,
The sails are here, the sails at last !
The Frenchman heaves in sight.

And swiftly now the order comes
To give the Frenchman chase,
The Frenchman who is lost, we know,
If we can win the race.

Hurrah ! the coward's flight is vain,
The ships are drawing nigh,
Each man prepares to win the fight—
To win the fight or die.

And soon the cannons' smoke and boom
Are rolling all around,
Through two fiercee hours of clangorous strife
Is heard the deadly sound;

Wild scene of strange delirious joy,
Yet desolating woe,
For now a shot our captain fells,
And he is borne below.

Two seamen gently bear him down,
And while the surgeon tries
To bind his wound, he looks on us
With tender, pitying eyes.

The strife ne'er stays—the bearers bring
Another blood-stained man.
“ Surgeon,” our captain says at once,
“ Go, save him if you can.

“ My wound is mortal ; thus for me
 Your care is all in vain,
Not so with him, then use your power
 To ease his heavier pain.”

Soon ebbed our captain’s tide of life—
 Short was the time for him—
Yet still his constant mind was clear
 Although his eyes grew dim.

And in a while his heart was glad
 For we had won the day,
His noble heart was satisfied—
 His spirit passed away.

JUNE 22ND, 1893.⁸

LET England mourn for these her gallant sons,
Who, seeing death was certain, yet remained
Steadfast to duty, all unconsciously
Grown to be heroes,—mourn for them whose souls,
Fired with immortal courage, conquered fear.
Let England grieve with them who, silent, weep
A loss irreparable with bitter tears.
Let England grieve for him who, though he erred
Soon felt perchance, in feeling he had erred,
An agony more great than death itself.

* * * * *

Let England still rejoice, for now she knows,
Though time and science change the face of war,
The stuff of English hearts they cannot change.

July 5th, 1893.

PICTURES OF TRAVEL.

PALMS BY MOONLIGHT AT ALICANTE.

PALMS by moonlight! waving palms,
How the thought of you embalms
In memory still the spot whereon I saw you last!
Softly, wonderfully clear
On that night did you appear
Whose blissful hours, swift-winged, too soon, too
soon, were past.

Here the eye could range at will,
And of beauty take its fill,
Beauty so rare it soothed as soothes a heav'n-sent
dream—
Or a mellow Eastern tale
Where the genii ride the gale
And glide among such trees on many a moonlight
gleam.

For the strange ethereal sight
Thrilled me with a new delight,
While still the full-orbed moon o'er leaf o'er
feathery bough
From a sky of purest blue
Silver glory gently threw.
Then rapturous visions came I know not whence
or how—

Visions, sweet and kind, that stole
Through my hush'd and happy soul
To strive against their power had been a vain
endeavour,
And, with ravished eye and heart,
Wished I never to depart,
Looking, I longed to live, and see these sights for
ever.

JOÃO TO CONSTANÇA.

(A LESTÉ⁹ SUNRISE IN MADEIRA.)

YONDER flush across the sea
Brings the morning back to me
When you seemed to lend the light
That dispersed the lingering night ;
When I heard your step, and knew
Joy of joy ! 'twas surely you ;
When I turned and saw your face,
Saw you glide with girlish grace ;
Though before my heart was moved,
Then it was that first I loved.

Rosy cloudlets, lately dun,
Seemed as now to hide the sun ;

Other cloudlets seemed to stand
Ready waiting his command.
Brighter, brighter grew the group,
Every tint was in the troop,
Red, and blue, and rich maroon,
Fleecy white appearing soon,
As at length we plighted troth,
Hallowed moments for us both.

O'er the peaks the vapoury shrouds
Shifted with the shifting clouds ;
Faintly purpled clouds were spread
O'er the peaceful ocean's bed ;
Clouds empurpled now, and grand,
Cast a halo o'er the land.
Every bird and opening flower
Felt the gladness of the hour,
As the gentle landward breeze
Stirred the tall banana-trees.

You remember how the day,
While dawn's freshness wore away,
Took a dimmer purple hue
As the clouds were changed anew.
You remember how we walked,
You remember how we talked,
How, beneath this trellised vine,
Oft you told me you were mine,
Each remembrance makes more clear
All the debt I owe you, dear.

FRANCISCA TO JASPEAR:
A MADEIRAN IDYL.

THE rich—the rich alone—may dream of death
As solace for their sorrow, not the poor.
Whate'er their grief, the poor have work to do
If they would not behold their dear ones starve.
Now were *I* dead there's none to pluck the fruit
And sort it on our stall o' market days,
Mother is ill, and through the scorching hours
Father is busy 'mid the sugar-canies.

It seems but yesterday since you and I,
Happy with thoughts of coming happiness,
Lived in the future, for the pleasant years
Stretched all before us, fraught with all the joy

That only love which changes not can give.
Never shall I forget how once we sat
Here where the orange-trees yield grateful shade,
As with fond eyes of truth you told to me
Once and again the sweet familiar tale
That ever to a maiden's heart is new.

Far, far beneath me, shimmering in the sun,
Were palms with shapely branches, outlined now
More clearly by the strong light pouring down,
And nearer, on the left, an avenue
Of red and white camellias full in flower
Formed one long vista filled with varying hues,
While countless clustering vines and citron trees
Gleamed in a rare, a radiant mingled glow
Of gorgeous colour. The banana-trees,
Each with its fragrant load of luscious fruit,
The graceful guavas with their light-green leaves,
The loquats with their deeper verdant tints,

The stately yam-trees with their blossoms white,
Stood forth in all their loveliness together.

Delightful was it, when the sun declined,
To loiter with you as the breath of night
Conquered the sultry ardour of the day ;
To see the moon rise over silent seas ;
To see the summer heavens, now decked with stars,
Vie with the shafts of distance-mellowed light
From many a cottage on the lone crag-sides
In making a rich girdle round the bay ;
To hear the soft *machête*¹⁰ play some air
Of gayest sound, perhaps a mazy dance.

Alas ! alas for me, such hours of bliss
Can nevermore return, for you are dead.
Good were it if I lay where you are laid
In that fair spot where one may hear the waves
Break idly on the shingle beach below
In noon tide heat when scarce a lizard stirs ;

Where scented roses cling around the tombs
Still blooming on throughout the sunny year.

* * * *

Yes, mother, I am coming, you must look
At these my oranges, fresh plucked and ripe,
And at my custard apples, they will be
The finest in the market-place to-day.

CHRISTMAS IN THE SUMMER SUNSHINE.

(FUNCHAL, MADEIRA.)

CHRISTMAS in the summer sunshine! O how wonderful it seems,—

Dowered with gladness are its moments, realizing poet-dreams,

While its moments hasten from me, how I wish they came to stay,—

How I wish their guileless pleasure nevermore might pass away.

Softly play around my forehead breathings of the seaward breeze,

As it stirs the swaying branches of the palms and orange-trees,—

As it stirs the cactus growing on the gaunt uprising
cliffs

Hanging o'er the gleaming ocean dotted with the
fishing skiffs.

Nature here with slightest tendance grants her
gifts of loveliest hue—

Gives among the vine-clad ridges wild-flowers
purple, golden, blue,—

Here azaleas, rich gardenias ope their blossoms to
the air,

With the rose and trained geranium—whose wild
types are also fair.

Pure and calm the moonlight radiance for the
people as they pass

On the eve of merry Christmas to and from the
midnight mass;

While the jocund serenaders through the balmy
hours of night

By their songs and sprightly music often bring a
brief delight.

Christmas in the summer sunshine! neither frost
nor snow are here,

Buoyant health can welcome winter but it fills the
sick with fear—

Here the sick with friends around them spend a
cheerful Christmas day,

Thinking of but seldom pining for a chill home
far away.

VERSES

ON A VASE FILLED WITH SUB-TROPICAL FLOWERS
GROWN IN THE OPEN AIR AT MADEIRA,
IN DECEMBER.

Most beauteous flowers !
Come ye to tell of summer hours,
Of balmy breezes—lengthened days,
Of warblers' blithesome lays ?

Thus come ye not,
For not in summer lies your lot,
No lengthened days attend your birth
Nor songsters' vocal mirth.

Yet gentle gales
Are near, and sunshine still prevails,
As in frail loveliness ye lie
Too soon, alas ! to die.

Ah fair, how fair,
Here Nature working everywhere,—
If winter thus it makes to me,
What must the spring-time be !

And yet, although
Each plant delights in southern glow,
Upon no zephyr is there spent
One breath of subtle scent.

’Tis England’s flowers—
The lily and rose of English bowers—
Retain the perfume and the glow :
These blossoms only blow.

'Tis England's spring
Whose every floweret seems to bring
New sweets to blend with every breeze
Among the budding trees.

Yet 'tis a power,
This glory of each plant and flower,
To make the poet's heart rejoice
And sing with gladsome voice.

The poet feels—
Yet rarely even he reveals—
The restful store of blissful thought
Such flowers to him have brought.

ON THE ROAD TO CAMARA DE
LOBOS, MADEIRA.

JANUARY, 18—.

THE sun that is setting afar in the west
In raiment of glory goes down to his rest,
And, like a young maiden who wishes good-bye
To the lover when leaving her, blushes the sky ;
How fair is the picture as now in the west
In raiment of glory the sun goes to rest.

The clouds in apparel of sunset appear,
Apparel of beauty while Evening draws near,
While calmly they watch o'er the sleep of the sea
Unstirred by the breezes. How wondrous to me
Is the peace of the picture, as now in the west
In raiment of glory the sun goes to rest.

How peerless and perfect God's painting appears,
His delicate work never fades with the years ;
His painting now quiet, now wild beyond speech,
Man only can copy, man never can reach
In grandeur. So thought I, as now in the west
In raiment of glory the sun goes to rest.

SUNDAY MORNING OFF MAZAGAN,
MOROCCO.

A MAGIC city Fancy-dight,
Thou seem'st this tranquil Sabbath day,
Strange town all glittering, treeless, white,
Begirt with sand and seething spray—

Lit by the sun whose rays reveal
Each flat-roofed Orient dwelling-place,—
Each stately mosque, each well whose wheel
A camel turns with tireless pace.

Dark Moors in their fantastic dress,
In haste to reach us, leave the shore,—
They make the distance less and less,
So strong the stroke of each long oar.

Now they have reached us and with pride
Disdain the aid the steps afford,
Bare feet from heel-less slippers glide,
And, cat-like, quick they spring on board.

All speak at once, with gestures quaint,
And few but in an unknown tongue,
Those in the boats take up the plaint,
And on the deck still more have sprung.

A single ship is in the bay
Besides our own,—no others ride
At anchor. And she goes her way—
But not until to-morrow's tide.

And from her mizen-mast there floats—
Dear sight to every British heart—
That flag whose mingled hue denotes
A union naught should ever part.

A welcome standard ! 'tis a sign—
A welcome sign—that some are here
Who worship at a common shrine,
Who pray like me—like me revere.

ON LOOKING UP THE VALE OF
'CAUTERETS, HAUTES PYRÉNÉES,
BY NIGHT.

THOUGH night is here,
In outline soft I see
A vista through the gloom, where, mirrored clear,
Gleam rock and peak and tree.

The mountain forms
In solemn grandeur rise,
Each summit still the strength of countless storms
For countless years defies.

The dark-green pines
Clothe all the slopes around—

How lone these slopes on which each cold star
shines!

Nor doth a single sound

 In invade the calm,—
 Or by its presence change
The sense of vastness, soothing like a balm,
 From heaven so new and strange.

THE SOUTHERN NIGHT.

(THE VALLEY OF THE GAVE DE PAU.)

AH! lovelier comes the southern night
Than night of northern skies,
Where tedious twilight mocks the flight
Of day that slowly dies—
Here placid Evening's starry veil
O'er all is swiftly cast—
Here peace seems wafted on the gale—
And care awhile is past.

In southern summer's mellow night
How sweet it is to stray
'Mid fairest scenes which soft moonlight
Make fairer far than day!

How fair the widely stretching woods
That gird the spacious plain,
While watchful Silence, queen-like, broods
O'er them in sombre reign—
How fair the river's crystal thread,
Seen faintly from afar,
As silvery starlight now is shed
From many a tranquil star.

In southern summer's mellow night
How sweet it is to stray
'Mid fairest scenes which soft moonlight
Make fairer far than day!

How fair the crested mountains lie,
Distant, yet wondrous clear,
Their snow-capt peaks against the sky
Uprising tier on tier;—
How fair the sleeping landscape seems,
While here and there are heard

Sounds bringing Music's richest dreams
Or laughter-laden word.

In southern summer's mellow night
How sweet it is to stray
'Mid fairest scenes which soft moonlight
Make fairer far than day!

LINES:

SUGGESTED BY SEEING, AT THE SUMMIT OF THE SIMPLON PASS, A STONE, FRAGMENT OF SOME RUDE ANCIENT CARVING, BROUGHT PERHAPS FROM A NEIGHBOURING VALLEY FOR ROAD-MAKING PURPOSES. THE STONE HAD LAIN DOUBTLESS FOR A LONG TIME NEAR THE SPOT WHERE I SAW IT.

How strange perchance have been, quaint carven stone,

Your harsh vicissitudes, how came you here?

Change spares not even you, though you have known

No soul-distress, nor Sorrow's blinding tear,
Nor deep unutterable heart-wrought fear.

Did you of some calm shrine once form a part
Where vesper hymns arose at close of day,
Where lovers true were linkèd heart to heart,
And humble villagers approached to pray,
Then, rising, went refreshed upon their way ?

And did fierce war destroy your place of peace
When some forgotten skirmish happened there
Ere yet the Austrian yoke was made to cease
By famed Marengo?¹¹ Bullets did not spare
The lowly church, and fire soon laid it bare.

Maybe, when fickle Time had brought neglect,
When reverence was a thing of long ago,
When none in all the hamlet had respect
For its old ruined fane, they came to throw
Its remnants thus away, and used you so.

Near you, must oft have wandered weary men
'Mid dire storm-battles fought on wintry
nights ;—

Near you, perchance, have happened now and then
More wondrous deeds, more awe-inspiring sights
Than sages know in whom the world delights.

What mighty tempests must have passed you by
When 'mid the riven mountains thunder pealed,
And storm-clouds came apace athwart the sky
In mad career, while Nature half revealed
The grandeur of the tumult, half concealed

Its majesty and power. The silent snows
Must oft have lain upon you, when the hands
Of Winter framed his lofty couch, and chose
His glacier lairs—when all the higher lands
Loomed ghastly, shuddering at his dread com-
mands

In solemn midnight hours when callous stars
Shine down on snow-drifts, on the glaciers lone,
And on snow-laden pines: when nothing mars

That spectacle to human eyes scarce known,
Where Nature rears 'mid rocks her frost-bound
throne.

Yet now you are broken up to make a road—
Fallen from your pristine state, and haply too
You will be worthless in your chill abode,
And shrink from man's unfeeling, heedless view
In your small nook, ignoble, poor, and new.

IN THE NEW FOREST.

Most clear! most fair!
The swelling woodland lies,
Stretching in leafy glory everywhere
Before my wondering eyes.

Here mighty oaks,
Stalwart, and vast, and strong,
A thousand years have faced the tempest's strokes—
Have been the home of song.

Here wave the boughs
Of tall and sombre pines,
Here stands "the temple of beeches," made for
vows
Of love when softly shines

The summer moon.

Here tremulous branches sway
Of sun-lit birches, on the sward at noon
Their shadows seem at play.

I linger still
In this sweet solitude,
Wishing my care-sick mind could taste at will
The healing sylvan mood.

RELIGIOUS POEMS.

GOD'S PEACE.

“The peace of God which passeth all understanding.”

Phil. iv. 7.

How oft amid the griefs of life—

Perplexed, misjudged, distressed—

O God, I waver in the strife,

And long and cry for rest.

How oft I feel—so great my need,

My courage so outworn—

As though my griefs were now indeed

Greater than could be borne.

Yet oft will come in times like these—

Come like a gracious balm—

A sense of peace, of joy, of ease,

A sense of heaven's own calm.

Ah ! then my heart would fain express
What I have felt before—
'Tis not I feel my griefs are less—
I feel Thy love is more.

And some are here, O God, to-day,
Here with their voiceless grief,
O give the aid for which they pray,
O give such sweet relief,
O give Thy peace, Thy calm, Thy joy,
Here as they humbly bow—
Such gifts nor Time nor Change destroy,
Give them, and give them *now*.

A RALLYING SONG.

SOMETIMES trustful, often fearful,
In this world of shifting wrong;
Sometimes joyful, often tearful,
Still be this our rallying song—
 Aye, in sadness
 And in gladness,
Nobly act, for God is strong.

When, oppressed by deep soul-sorrow,
Life beneath the darkest skies
Seems so drear that no to-morrow
Holds a threat of worse surprise—
 In such sadness
 As in gladness
Nobly act, for God is wise.

When our souls are tried, and tempted
Some ignoble end to buy,
From the coward's bonds exempted,
Let us resolutely cry—
 Evil sow not,
 That it grow not,
Nobly act, for God is nigh.

MORNING THOUGHTS.

SWEET-VOICED songsters softly singing
Tell me of a day begun,
Its appointed portion bringing
Of the duty to be done.

Last day's deeds are gone for ever,—
Seems it not most passing strange
Their results remain, and never
Can be touched by time or change?

Like a child, his pebble throwing
From the streamlet's sedgy marge,
Marking not the ripples growing
Though they one by one enlarge—

So, with influence still increasing,
Widening o'er Life's mystic sea,
Man deals out his actions,—ceasing
Only with Eternity.

Many yesterday, unthinking,
Chose the road which leads to night,—
While a few, with souls unshrinking,
Chose the pathway of the light.

Thus I muse with deep emotion
Whilst the moments melt away—
Muse upon the boundless ocean
Of the issues of *to-day*.

A SONG OF COMFORT.

Not always have we sorrow, there are seasons
When buoyant joy dispels all dreams of ruth—
Times when our thoughts of sorrow seem but
treasons
To king-like Truth.

Not always are we vexed by cares and troubles,—
Often the griefs of life appear no more—
Vanished, as on a lake the showery bubbles,
When rain is o'er.

Not always feel we that our hopes are blighted ;
A glad fruition will they often gain,
When we perceive the good are aye requited
Who conquer pain.

Not always should we grieve, each tribulation
Is sent to purify—to raise the soul,
To fit it for its glorious destination—
A heavenly goal.

THE BALANCE OF LIFE.

'Tis false to say the world, though sad,
 Hath no redeeming feature,
'Tis false to say the world, though glad,
 Can hold no hopeless creature.

The darkest life has oft a ray
 Of sunshine on the morrow,
The brightest life has many a day
 Whose hours are filled with sorrow.

No life with ceaseless grief is fraught,
 None with all bliss and beauty,
By varied teaching are we taught
 The way to walk in duty.

If happy be our earthly lot,
And free of Sorrow's burden,
Greater the need to linger not ;—
Our work shall have its guerdon :

Yet richer guerdon comes to those
Whom heav'n hath not exempted
From pain, who quell the self-same foes
Although more sorely tempted.

Each grief that sweeps across the heart,
If sinless be its sadness,
In Life's long lesson bears a part
And yields us future gladness.

“LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY.”

Luke xi. 1.

A DARK enigma is our life

Without Thy guiding ray;

Then calm, O Christ, its sordid strife

By teaching us to pray.

Prayer! only conqueror of the fears

And doubts along our way;

Whose holy influence ever cheers,—

What peace it brings to pray!

Oft lies our path through pain and woe

While in Earth’s night we dwell,

Yet prayer will prove a sun to show

That still Thou leadest well;

So when Life's mysteries distress,
And gloom enshrouds our day,
We plead that Thou wouldst make it less
By teaching us to pray.

HOLY QUIETUDE.

SPIRIT of holy quietude,
For thee my soul is sighing—
For thee in many a mournful mood
My soul is blindly crying—
But still a voice comes softly clear,
“That spirit seldom cometh here.”

Spirit of holy quietude,
While, weary, I am breasting
Life’s waves, bring with thee all things good—
Deep peace, and joy, and resting :—
Yet still the voice—“No, never here
Doth she thy soul would find appear.”

Spirit of holy quietude,
Grant me a single token—
Show me that Life's long conflict rude
By gleams of peace is broken ;
But the voice whispers in mine ear,
“ That spirit never dwelleth here.”

Spirit of holy quietude,
Mine earthly course is ending,
Now let thy peace within me brood,
Sin's strongest fetters rending ;
“ In heaven,” the voice says at my side—
“ In heaven alone doth she abide.”

LYRICS AND MISCELLANEOUS
POEMS.

THE UNFULFILLED IDEAL.

WHEN youthful Summer decks the sward
With flowers on plain and hill,
And Nature wins her meet reward
For working Winter's will,
Even then Life's music lacks a chord :
Something wanted still !

In Autumn, when each searing leaf
With gentle sorrow fraught,
And every garnered golden sheaf
Yields fruit for mingled thought :—
We feel a void—there comes a grief—
Something vaguely sought !

When Winter lays an icy hand
Where Spring had kissed the ground,
And stiff and stark lies all the land
Where Summer erst was crowned :—
We feel but do not understand :
Something still unfound !

When Spring returns with radiant grace
To fill the earth with song,
And gladness smiles in every place,
And love and life are strong,
Still comes the want we cannot trace :
Something wanted long !

THE CHILD COWPER AT BERKHAMPSTEAD.

“ Where the gard’ner Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way.”

COWPER, *My Mother’s Picture*.

BRIGHT beams of sunshine lit the lawn,
And all the landscape seemed as drawn
From some enchanter’s treasure ;—
The birds were singing loud and clear,
But most perchance he loved to hear
The blackbird’s cheery measure.

And while he loiter’d ’neath the trees
Soft scents were wafted by the breeze
That blew across the hay-field

Where village children then resorted,
And as among the swaths they sported
Transformed it to a play-field.

Did these dear visions fade away?
They did—and for their death that day
He felt a throb of sorrow;
But gladness came in sorrow's place
When Hope said with her smiling face,
“ ‘Twill live again to-morrow.”

IN ELLINGTON COPSE.

How lovely are these woodland ways
Clad in their summer dress,
Where come not din and smoke to mar
Their evening loveliness;

Where wild-rose and convolvulus
Are wov'n in every hedge,
And buttercups and foxgloves glow
By this clear brooklet's edge;

Where breezes waft their balmiest scents
Adown the silent wood,
And scarce a songster sings to break
The hush of solitude;

Where shadows creep across my path
And softly dies the day—
And Summer's beauty holds the world
Within her gracious sway.

This evening every wild-flower here
More deeply stirs my heart
Than alien flowers or prodigies
Of man's botanic art ;

This sweet-brier bough, that meekly pours
Its perfume on the air,
I would not give for any flower
The gardener deems most fair ;

I leave the rich their bowers of art
Wreathed with the rarest flowers,
Enough for me these woodland ways
In Summer's twilight hours.

A SONG OF EARLY SUMMER.

SWEET is the time when tender leaves
Burst forth in all their perfect grace,
When swallows twitter from the eaves,
And Spring to Summer yields her place ;

When red and white the chestnut shows,
When fragrance from the hawthorn spreads,
When fair the blue wistaria blows,
And iris lilies lift their heads.

Yet soon the chestnut petals fade,
Wistaria blooms droop one by one,
Soon sigh the leaves for welcome shade,
Then fall with dews at set of sun.

Not so the spring-time of the heart,
That knows nor change nor swift decay,
The spring-time of our nobler part
It ue'er shall fade or pass away.

THE HEART'S SUMMER.

SWEET is the noon of a summer day
When, through the woodlands coming,
The village sounds seem far away
And drowsy bees are humming.

Sweet are the hours of a summer night
When kindly dews are falling,
And thoughts that come with the fading light
Are soothing, or entralling.

Sweet are the tones of a friendly voice
When all seems gone but sorrow,
Bidding the heart once more rejoice,
For peace may come to-morrow.

Sweet is the sound of the world's applause
When fame at last hath found us,
And (wage for toil in a righteous cause)
Flings victory's wreath around us.

But sweeter far is a heart at rest,
A heart unsoured by sadness—
Which throbs within a blissful breast
With a God-imparted gladness.

THE AUTUMN IS DYING.

THE autumn is dying,
And leaves that are still,
Grief's tokens, are lying
On plain and on hill ;
My garden of pleasure
Lies withered and bare,
Oh the pitiless measure
Of ruin wrought there.

In a hedgerow wind-shaken
To wildest unrest,
Forlorn and forsaken
I see a bird's nest,

Its soft down decaying,
Its fledglings all flown,
Naught save the shell staying
Deserted and lone.

Then the thought rises, cleaving
The depths of my mind,
Soon we too shall be leaving
Our loved homes behind,
Soon the grave will enclose us—
Life's pilgrimage o'er—
“ And the place that now knows us
Shall know us no more.”

DECEMBER DAISIES AND DECEMBER DAYS.

AH, how the sight of these untimely flowers
Brings dear remembrances of summer hours,
When the full heart in buoyant mood was filled
With happiness—when the swift moments thrilled
The soul with subtle thoughts no words express.

Kind haleyon moments! How they soothe and
 bless
And beautify my sordid life. And here,
When this December day is stir-less, clear
At its brief twilight—when there shines afar
From out a cloudless heav'n yon evening star—
When southern breezes blow, nor storm nor rain
Disturb,—I dream 'tis summer come again.

THE POET'S INSPIRATION.

TRUE inspiration ever seems
A joy and yet a pain,
To light the poet's lofty dreams,
To purify his strain.

Its presence glorifies the line
Whose rhythmic measure halts,
Makes hackneyed thoughts seem half divine,
Till few perceive such faults.

And thus, although we sometimes find
Imperfect chords like these
In songs of many a master-mind,
How seldom they displease :

But when its presence is not felt,
Though smooth the verses roll—
Though cadences in sweetness melt—
They cannot stir the soul.

A MEMORY AND A PRESENCE.

WHEN clasping in mine own the hand
 Of him I loved the best,
Whose converse cheered, as sight of land
 Cheers mariners distressed,
How once I loved the darkening hour
 Of Summer's happy day,
As gently from each leaf and flower
 The daylight passed away.

For he had learnt to bear his part
 In Earth's unending strife,
To labour with unflinching heart
 Amid the ills of life—

To feel adversity and pain,
Hopes blighted, bitter wrong,
And yet, ere long, to find again
God's peace which makes men strong.

So would he talk of bygone years
In that hush'd eventide,
Of former hopes, delights, and fears,
Of early friends who died,
And wisely would my future trace,
Then leaving things of Time,
In raptured tones, with upturned face,
Would speak of themes sublime.

He had that wordless eloquence,
That strange, that wondrous power,
Which sways the soul with force intense
In calm of such an hour;

And walking where the shadows steal
 Across the garden here,
Alone with memory still I feel
 His spirit ever near.

“ WHILE THE SUNSET, SLOWLY DYING.”

WHILE the sunset, slowly dying,
Sheds a light o'er sea and strand,
And the night-chilled breeze is sighing
As the darkness wraps the land—
Come, with influence strong yet tender,
Mingled thoughts of vanished years,
Waking soul-thrills that can render
Sometimes joy and sometimes tears.
All the past, returning, seems
Present with its living dreams.

When the kindly summer's glory
Filled the earth with myriad charms,
First I breathed a lover's story—
First I felt true love's alarms—

First I pleaded with a maiden,
 Hazel-eyed, and pure, and fair
As that eve whose gales love-laden
 Wantoned with her auburn hair.
All the past, returning, seems
 Present with its living dreams.

Now to me how swiftly thronging
 Come the visions of the past—
Treasured past to me belonging—
 Span of bliss too deep to last :
Still do I remember clearly
 What I asked in trembling tone,
And her words, " I love you dearly,
 Yours I am, and yours alone."
All the past, returning, seems
 Present with its living dreams.

We were " wedded, happy-hearted,"
 And our future path seemed bright,

Who could tell we should be parted,
Love’s glad sun obscured in night?
Yet one eve, when softly sighing
Summer breezes lulled the rose,
I beheld her, fainting, dying,
I beheld her dim eyes close.
Ah, how living, fraught with woe,
Rise the sights of long ago!

* * * * *

Yet amid my sore dejection
Comes the comfort ever new—
Comes the balm, the sweet reflection,
To each other we were true.
For some end God sendeth sorrow,
When that end is gained at last,
In the radiant heavenly morrow
We shall meet—all sorrow past.
There, no longer fraught with woe,
Rise the days of long ago.

THE BRIDE'S SONG.

A FEW days more, a few days more,
And all the world will change !
For I shall enter through Love's door
To something sweet yet strange—
To that new land where lives no fear
Unshared by him I love—
Where I shall always, always hear
His voice where'er I rove.

Ah then, ah then, my duty lies
With him, and him alone,
Less duty than delight, surprise,
To me before unknown—

Delight that I am ever nigh
To do each fond behest,
Surprise that I, and only I,
Can make his life more blest.

Oft does he praise my sunny hair,
The bloom upon my cheeks—
Would that I were indeed so fair
When thus my dear one speaks.
I feel myself unworthy, yet
He takes me for his wife,
But I will yield—to pay my debt—
The service of my life.

THE HAWTHORN SPRAY.

HAPPY, with that strange happiness
Which Spring spreads o'er the land,
I see a girl, I see a boy,
They are walking hand in hand.
I hear them as they gaily talk,
They heed no future care,
He plucks a flushing hawthorn spray
To deck her fairer hair.

“ And let this be a token now,”
The merry boy exclaims,
“ That, some time in the coming years,
We two may link our names.

The may-buds are a symbol meet
Of this our treaty pure,
So may our compact bring us joy
And evermore endure."

* * * *

These two—though many years have fled—
Fled like a dream away,
Are still as true of heart as on
That unforgotten day.
And so together oft again
Amid the spring-tide's glow
They walk, remembering thankfully
Their love-pledge long ago.

THE PURITAN'S FAREWELL TO HIS
BETROTHED, 1642.

SHE—

WHEN Love arose and taught my heart
To hold thee first and chief,
I never dreamed that we should part
In pain beyond belief,
Then wherefore bring this aching wœ
To me, to thee, to all,
E'en though harsh Duty bids thee go
To obey thy faction's call ?

HE—

Nay, speak not so ; that sigh, that look,
Wound worse than blades of steel,

Yet what were I if I forsook,
Because of thine appeal,
No "faction" but God's righteous cause,
No struggle of greed and shame—
One stern last stand for Right and laws
That win His high acclaim?

Truth, Justice, Conscience plead with me,
Then wouldest thou have me, dear,
For calm and ease and joy with thee
To yield to craven fear—
To prove a recreant from the right—
A coward sore afraid—
A traitor in the coming fight
Where England needs mine aid?

Thou murmur'st, "We shall meet no more:"
I know, I know thy pain,
Our life is brief, but when 'tis o'er
True lovers live again—

They live again in that fair land
Where comes nor strife nor sword—
Where Truth and Joy go hand in hand—
And Love hath Faith's reward.

There, where each feeling stands confessed,
Wilt thou know all my sorrow—
Wilt know what pangs have rent my breast
Ere leaving thee to-morrow.
Lo, hearken to the distant chime,
To us a knell of sadness,
Then let us spend our span of time
In peace more deep than gladness.

SHE—

The weakness goes : oh, heed it not !
My fears have done thee wrong ;
My pain is but my woman's lot,
And Love shall make me strong :—

In these brave arms I will be brave,
And while thou still art here,
To God will lift my soul, and crave
The peace which casts out fear.

PASSION'S SLAVE.

BLIND passion ever showed its maddening power
Enthroned within him—a sin-garnered dower
Of quenchless loves and longings. That fierce
 storm

Which breaks the boughs of Life, where sheltered
 warm

Repose, like unfledged nestlings, Life's chief joys,
Swept o'er his soul—the wave that swift destroys
Man's store of peace. What years of labour cost
He by one fatal step for ever lost.

TWO LIVES.

A COTTAGE home: a peaceful place
Where Sorrow hides her pallid face;
Husband and wife, a happy pair,
Who thankfully Life's blessings share;
And living far from towns' turmoil,
They simply crave a "leave to toil!"

* * * * *

A workhouse full of dreary din,
Full of the signs of want and sin.
A man and woman sinking fast,
Sinking, yet conscious to the last,
Their senses steeped in wrathful woe
None but the frugal poor can know

When first, despite their care, is spent
Their all through sickness and the rent ;
When first, despite their abject grief,
No kindly landlord grants relief ;
When first, despite their abject gloom,
His agent comes—decrees their doom ;
When first within the workhouse gate
Silent they stand, how desolate !
When first they feel, with sorrow bowed,
The loneliness amid a crowd—
When first they feel in their distress
That is the deepest loneliness ;
When first they feel they near their end,
Yet by their bed no former friend ;
When now, despite their struggles—struggles
long and brave—
Their death but fills—but helps to fill—a
pauper's grave.

TO SIR WALTER SCOTT.

(WRITTEN AFTER READING HIS "JOURNAL.")

Poet, 'twas no strange sun that shone on thee
Through thy pure life so crowned with dignity,
No sun with light now clouded, now intense,
But aye the unclouded sun of common-sense.

SOLITUDE.

AMID the throng
Which, restless, moves along
With hurrying footsteps o'er the earth,
But few their noblest thoughts have known,
Seldom save when alone
Come thoughts of worth.

It needs the balm
Of soul-restoring calm
To purge the mind of Life's alloy ;
Thus yielding back Man's highest power,
His blessèd pristine dower
Of peace and joy.

And thus do men
With new and eager ken
Taste those rich joys that only live
In solitude—joys which uplift
Their souls to Truth—best gift
That Life can give.

HUMOROUS POEMS.

MOONLIGHT ON THE TAGUS.

THE moon shines o'er the Tagus. Now a flood
Of soft-spun sparkling radiance clothes the scene
With dazzling splendour, save where shadows lie
Upon the river's bosom, sheltering there
The coward Darkness, here dethroned awhile,
By the moon's great though seeming gentle might.
Ah me, how beautiful! Deep azure sky,
Deep azure sea, and steadfast-beaming stars,—
A dreamy blissful languor stealeth fast
Over my soul while musing pensively
On this fair vista steeped in rapt repose,
And I forget the busy throng of life
That it presents by day,—and almost now
I could imagine it some magic realm

Enchanted in far fairyland, beyond
The power of mortal reach.

But soon a voice
Says, “Supper’s come at last, let’s eat, and then
to bed.”

WAITING FOR THE DENTIST.

THOUGH many dismal years I've been
To dull old Care apprenticed,
Of smaller woes the worst I've seen
Is—waiting for the dentist !

How dreary is the cheerless room
Where pain must bide his pleasure,
The very chairs are steeped in gloom
And seem to grieve at leisure,

As if his patients' molar grief,
So uncontrolled its swelling,
For its fierce tide had sought relief
By deluging the dwelling.

Books cannot soothe a rampant tooth
Though they enrich a table,
Sorrow alone seems kin to truth,
And joy a lying fable.

When from the window you, perchance,
Behold sweet girlhood's graces,
They only make you look askance
And think how sore your face is.

On many chairs and sofas, too,
More martyrs round you languish,
You glance at them, they glance at you,
And give a groan of anguish.

You deem it hard their turn arrives
Before you in rotation,
Or they wax wrath that yours deprives
Their case of consolation.

You muse upon the ruthless wrench
That buys a tooth's departing,
Or how the stopping-pangs to quench,
In which you may be starting;

Or haply on these ivory elips
Harsh Nature may deny you,
But which the "golden key" equips
Man's genius to supply you.

No words your mood of mind express,
A mood devoid of quiet,
Where pain, delight, and keen distress
Mingle in hopeless riot.

Yes, though much sorrow one must know
While to old Care apprenticed,
The greatest unheroie woe
Is—waiting for the dentist.

NOTES.

Note to “At the Grave of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.”

1. Rossetti died at Birchington-on-Sea, Kent, on the 9th of April, 1882.

Note to “Browning’s Funeral—I.”

2. See Browning’s poem, entitled “In a Gondola.”

Note to “The Taking of the Flag.”

3. The epithet “Dutch rag” is said to have been the actual phrase used by the sailor whom Hopson addressed. The boy had only joined the fleet on the day before as a volunteer, and had previously been a tailor’s apprentice. *Vide “Sea Fights,”* p. 73. Professor Langton, in “The Dictionary of National Biography,” expresses his opinion, however, that the incident on which this poem is based has no historical foundation.

Notes to “The Keeping of the Vow.”

4. When I first versified this incident, I was not aware that the subject had been already dealt with under the title of “The Heart of the Bruce,” by Professor Aytoun.

5. It will be remembered that the struggle in Spain between the Moors and the Christians lasted for centuries.

6. It is evident, from what we know of his conduct, that Douglas regarded the war as pre-eminently a religious one.

Note to "The Death of Captain Hunt."

7. See "Battles of the British Navy," vol. i., p. 210.

Note to "June 22nd, 1893."

8. The loss of H.M.S. "Victoria."

Note to "Joāo to Constança."

9. The *lesté* is a south-east wind felt in Madeira, and frequently prevalent for several days. At the beginning or close of a *lesté* the sunrises and sunsets are superb. Purple is the colour particularly prominent.

Note to "Franeisca to Jaspear."

10. The Portuguese guitar.

Note to "Lines on a Stone near the Summit of the Simplon Pass."

11. There was some desultory fighting in the Italian Alpine valleys before Napoleon the First's decisive victory of Marengo.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

CHARLES WHITEHEAD:

A MONOGRAPH,

WITH EXTRACTS FROM HIS WORKS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

“It is strange how men with a true touch of genius in them can sink out of recognition ; and this occurs very rapidly sometimes, as in the case of Charles Whitehead. Several works by this writer ought not to be allowed to drop out of English literature, and a publisher might do worse than by reprinting some of them. They contain ever and again unquestionable evidence of power. Mr. Mackenzie Bell’s sketch may consequently be welcomed for reviving the interest in Whitehead. . . . Whitehead’s verse attracted the notice of two very different men, Dante Rossetti and Christopher North ; while one of his novels inspired a similar feeling in Dickens.”—*Times*.

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